



## Reducing the Cost of Asthma Treatment

### UPCOMING ASTHMA EVENTS AT ST. ALEXIUS MEDICAL CENTER

April 15, 2010

7:00 PM

**Asthma: Fact,  
Myth, and Man-  
agement**

4<sup>th</sup> Floor Confer-  
ence Center

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### UPCOMING NEWSLETTER TOPICS

\*Triggers

\*Action Plans

\*Environmental  
Controls

\*Special Topics  
in Asthma  
Management

\*And more!

With the economy in a recession and many Americans out of work, health care costs can become a serious financial problem for families. If you have a chronic health condition, like asthma, a portion of your monthly household budget likely goes to asthma medication. Some people have several chronic health conditions and are looking for ways to reduce cost and appropriately manage their illnesses. While it may be tempting to try to stretch your medication or pick and choose which condition to treat first, this can be very dangerous.<sup>1</sup> Asthma can be a serious and deadly health condition, and you should never cut back on preventative care.<sup>1</sup> Prevention is key to reducing your asthma healthcare costs.<sup>1</sup>

Many asthma patients find their asthma medications to be costly, and they choose to stop taking their daily medicine.<sup>1</sup> But when you skip your preventative care, you run the risk of a major asthma attack and ER visit or hospitalization. In Illinois in 2004, the average asthma hospitalization cost over \$12,000!<sup>2</sup> If, for example, your daily maintenance and rescue medications cost you \$150 a month, that comes to \$1800 a year. You are saving over \$ 10,000 a year by preventing just one hospitalization!

You may be thinking that you still need to find a way to make your preventative care more affordable. Here are some ways to reduce healthcare costs:

1. Talk with your doctor about your medications. There may be some dosing adjustments, generic alternatives, or substitutions that could be made.<sup>3</sup>
2. See if you qualify for drug assistance programs that would help pay for part of your medications.<sup>3</sup> Your doctor may be able to help you.
3. Check to see if your pharmacy offers a mail order prescription program. Purchasing several months worth of medication at a time can be more cost effective.<sup>1</sup>
4. Ask your doctor if they offer samples of your medication.<sup>1</sup> You could “try it before you buy it”.
5. One of the most cost effective ways to manage your asthma is to treat your environment and recognize what triggers your asthma.<sup>3</sup> We will talk about how to identify and avoid triggers in our next newsletter.

Asthma care can be costly, but you can't put a price on a healthy life. Remember to talk with your doctor if you are having trouble affording your medication. Don't be embarrassed to ask for help. Your doctor and his or her staff is there to help you. Remember to take care of yourself, and don't forget to treat your asthma even if you are sick with another illness. Asthma is a chronic health condition and it can flare up when you least expect it. Take care, and stay healthy this winter!

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View past issues of Asthma newsletters on the Asthma program website:

[www.AlexianBrothersHealth.org/AsthmaEducationProgram](http://www.AlexianBrothersHealth.org/AsthmaEducationProgram)

